

**FSH 2209.13 - GRAZING PERMIT ADMINISTRATION HANDBOOK
CHAPTER 90 - RANGELAND MANAGEMENT DECISIONMAKING**

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This chapter focuses on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) analysis, NEPA-based decisions, and the implementation of those decisions regarding rangeland management and livestock grazing with an objective of achieving and maintaining desired rangeland conditions on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The direction that follows is for determining whether livestock grazing is an acceptable use on a given allotment of National Forest System land. General environmental analysis requirements are set forth in regulations adopted by the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 CFR 1500 et seq. and at FSH 1909.15.

A proposed action may be relatively broad, encompassing several actions intended to achieve desired rangeland conditions, or the proposed action could be relatively narrow and focus only on the authorization of livestock grazing. In the latter case, the proposed action need only be consistent with the land and resource management plan (LRMP).

Most livestock grazing on National Forest System lands has occurred in the areas presently grazed, in a variety of forms, for over a hundred years. Typically during that time numerous grazing systems have been implemented along with accompanying range improvements. Stocking rates and seasons of use have been adjusted; the timing, intensity, frequency, and duration of grazing have been continually fine tuned over time. More recently, further adjustments have been made on many allotments to provide for the needs of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), clean water, and archeological structures and artifacts. This dynamic evolution of management, on most allotments, results in the ability to narrow the range of alternatives that must be analyzed in detail. When a proposed action includes authorization of livestock grazing, and lacks any significant issues identified during scoping, alternatives analyzed in detail would be limited to: the proposed action, no action (which is no grazing), and current management.

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Among other things, LRMPs identify the suitability of land on National Forest System units to produce forage for grazing animals and establish programmatic direction for grazing activities, including goals, objectives, desired conditions, standards, guidelines, and monitoring requirements. Although an area may be deemed suitable for use by livestock in a LRMP, a project-level analysis evaluating the site-specific impacts of the grazing activity, in conformance with NEPA, is required in order to authorize livestock grazing on specific allotment(s). See FSM 1920 and FSH 1909.12 for basic direction for addressing rangeland resources in LRMPs.

91.1 - Consistency with Land and Resource Management Plan

Under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.), project-level decisions, which authorize the use of specific National Forest System lands for a particular purpose like livestock grazing must be consistent with the broad programmatic direction

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established in the LRMP. Consistency is determined by examining whether the project-level decision implements the goals, objectives, desired conditions, standards and guidelines, and monitoring requirements from the LRMP. Where necessary, grazing permits must be modified to ensure consistency with the LRMP.

91.2 - Relationship of Land and Resource Management Plans to Grazing Permit

Pertinent direction in LRMPs relating to livestock grazing are included directly in part 3 of the grazing permit (sec. 94.2) on Forms FS-2200-10a, FS-2200-10b, and FS-2200-10c if an allotment management plan (AMP) either does not exist or is inconsistent with the LRMP. The AMP becomes a part the grazing permit form, part 3. These forms are available electronically on the forms webpage on the FS Web/Intranet.

92 - PHASES OF RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING

There are three distinct phases in the rangeland project planning process:

1. The analysis process leading up to and including the development of a proposed action, referred to as “plan-to-project”;
2. Project initiation; and
3. The project-level planning and NEPA compliance process which is focused on site-specific analysis of the proposed action and alternative actions.

These analyses may be conducted on an allotment or group of allotments that share similar ecological conditions and resource issues. If a thorough analysis is conducted in development of the proposed action, the NEPA process can move more quickly and efficiently.

92.1 - Plan-to-Project Analysis

The responsible official has broad discretion in determining what analysis precedes formal NEPA analysis and documentation. The steps that follow lend themselves to those project proposals that involve a higher level of complexity and can be adjusted as warranted. These are important steps that, if taken in preparation for a project-level NEPA proposal, increase the efficiency of the NEPA planning process. These steps include:

1. Identification of desired conditions (sec. 92.11);
2. Identification of existing conditions (sec. 92.12);
3. Identification of resource management needs (sec. 92.13);

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4. Identification of possible practices (sec. 92.14), and
5. Identification of information needs (sec. 92.15).

92.11 - Identification of Desired Conditions

A team, using an interdisciplinary approach, identifies the desired conditions for rangelands and other related resources within the analysis area. Desired conditions should be specific, quantifiable, and focused. Desired condition statements have two distinct scales.

1. At the landscape scale, desired conditions are generally taken directly from the LRMP.
2. At the broad scale, desired conditions are then further described on a site-specific scale for reference areas.

Monitoring can then tie to these reference areas as a means of determining progress toward meeting the desired conditions.

92.12 - Identification of Existing Conditions

An analysis team examines the existing conditions within the analysis area for all pertinent resources for which a desired condition is identified, such as ecological status of the vegetation, composition and arrangement of plant communities, status and function of riparian areas and wetlands, stream bank and stream channel characteristics, wildlife and fish habitat characteristics, cultural resource protection, soil protection, and water quality.

Existing conditions should be specific and quantified where possible. Existing conditions may be evaluated at two scales.

1. At the landscape scale, existing conditions are generally taken from watershed-level or other area assessments.
2. At the project-level, existing conditions may be identified through a myriad of sources, including rangeland inspections, rangeland analyses, environmental analysis documentation for other actions in the area, electronic resource databases, and anecdotal information from previous or current grazing permittees or other knowledgeable sources.

The data and information must be pertinent to identifying differences between existing and desired conditions related to rangeland resources. Data collected should address the appropriate timing, intensity, frequency, and duration issues of livestock grazing so that alternatives can be developed that utilize an adaptive management approach based on specific monitoring criteria.

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Do not collect needless information that may not help identify rangeland resource problems and that is not specific to the project area.

The preferable sequence of project-level planning is to complete large-scale assessments, encompassing a watershed or sub-watershed, prior to initiating the project-level decisionmaking process. This allows for efficient use at the project level of the inventory, analysis, and assessment information gathered at the larger scale. Upon the completion of large-scale assessments, site-specific analyses, and project-level decisions may be scaled down to allotments that share similar ecological conditions and resource issues. Project-level decisionmaking conducted in this manner is more expeditious and efficient.

92.13 - Identification of Resource Management Needs

Identification of resource management needs is simply the comparison of desired conditions with existing conditions to determine the extent and rate at which current management is meeting or moving toward those desired conditions. Where a particular existing condition and desired condition are the same, there is no need for change. Conversely, where an existing condition and a desired condition are not the same, there is a need for change. A need for change should equate to the purpose and need for the action to be proposed.

Monitoring (sec. 95) and permit administration may have already identified certain “concerns” on an allotment. That means that there is already knowledge of specific existing conditions that are not the same as desired conditions. The plan-to-project analysis helps to methodically identify existing conditions, desired conditions, and any disparity between them so that the analysis team and the line officer can reach agreement on rangeland resource management concerns before identifying possible practices.

Inspections, monitoring, and continual dialogue with permittees provides an ongoing feedback loop for the need to maintain or change management on the ground. Issuance of a permit and subsequent allotment administration, by its very nature, establishes an obligation for close working relations between agency personnel and permittees.

92.14 - Identification of Possible Practices

Identify possible practices or actions that may be undertaken to meet the identified management needs. The responsible official may, in his or her discretion, limit the list of possible practices to various livestock grazing practices, or alternatively consider all types of practices that may be employed to reach desired rangeland conditions. Ultimately, the responsible official decides which of the identified possible practices are carried forward to a proposed action. In doing so, the responsible official should consider a full array of likely possibilities in the proposed action.

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92.15 - Identification of Information Needs

1. Evaluate the quality, accuracy, and usefulness of the information being used to describe existing conditions.
2. Identify any important gaps in knowledge that keep the analysis team from understanding and evaluating differences between desired and existing conditions.
3. Estimate what it would cost in terms of time, money, and effort to obtain missing information, and if it is worthwhile to collect it.
4. Identify how the information gap relates to the decision framework.
5. Determine if the information is important enough for the decision that the information must be gathered or the decision rationale will be lacking.

92.2 - Project Initiation

To initiate a project, the following steps are then taken:

1. Development of a decision framework (sec. 92.21);
2. Development of a purpose and need statement (sec. 92.22); and
3. Development of a proposed action (sec. 92.23).

92.21 - Decision Framework

Before characterizing the nature of a livestock grazing authorization decision, it is important to establish whether or not a valid decision already exists. If a decision has already been made to authorize livestock grazing in a specific area, and resource conditions are at or moving toward desired conditions, a new decision may not be necessary. Review the environmental analysis documentation and assess whether there is sufficient new information, technology, or changed conditions to warrant a new analysis and decision. If a previous analysis and decision are still valid, document this finding and continue to implement the decision to authorize livestock grazing by issuing a new permit and continuing to apply management as prescribed in the decision (sec. 96).

There is a two-part decision to be made for authorizing livestock grazing.

1. Whether livestock grazing should be authorized on all, part, or none of the project area.

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2. If the decision is to authorize some level of livestock grazing, then what management prescriptions will be applied (including standards, guidelines, grazing management, and monitoring) to ensure that desired condition objectives are met or that movement occurs toward those objectives in an acceptable timeframe.

92.22 - Purpose and Need

Neither the Council on Environmental Quality regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508, nor the courts have made a distinction between the terms “purpose” and “need.” Therefore, “purpose and need” is referred to as a single item. The purpose and need statement should simply explain why the action is being proposed. The purpose and need statement should answer the questions: “Why here?” and “Why now?”

The purpose and need for the proposed action has its origin in the gaps between desired resource conditions and existing conditions. These gaps, articulated as “resource management needs” (sec. 92.13), provide the basis for describing the purpose and need for action. Where existing resource conditions are meeting or moving toward the desired conditions, the purpose and need for action may simply be that a qualified applicant has requested authorization to graze livestock.

92.23 - Proposed Action

1. The proposed action is initially developed as a possible practice during the plan-to-project analysis (sec. 92.1). A proposed action may undergo many refinements before being formally proposed. Once an action is proposed, the NEPA process begins. Agency personnel should actively work together with permittees to resolve identified management problems. Development of a proposed action is ideally a partnership effort done informally within the obligations imposed by the grazing permit (sec. 94.2). The agency defines the desired land condition; permittees have a stake in helping to determine how to get there when livestock grazing is authorized. If a plan-to-project analysis indicates that livestock grazing is a possible management practice, then the proposed action should include the authorization of livestock grazing and the required livestock grazing management practices necessary to maintain or attain desired resource conditions.

2. A proposed action that includes authorization of livestock grazing shall also include the basic elements of an allotment management plan (AMP) (sec. 94.1) because these elements will ultimately be obtained directly from the NEPA-based decision and will be included in part 3 of the grazing permit Forms FS-2200-10a, FS-2200-10b, and FS-2200-10c) as an AMP. Both the issuance of the permit and the development or amendment of an AMP that becomes a part of the permit is considered an administrative action that implements the NEPA-based decision (sec. 94). The pertinent parts of an AMP include:

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- a. Management objectives in terms of the condition and trend of the rangeland resources;
 - b. Required livestock management practices including maximum amount of use in terms of allowable use levels to achieve management objectives;
 - c. Structural or non-structural improvements that are necessary and ripe for implementation; and,
 - d. Appropriate monitoring to determine if management objectives are being met or if adaptive management alterations are needed.
3. When the proposed action includes an adaptive management approach, there should be a change from specifying a fixed number of livestock and on- and off- dates to specifying the maximum limits or parameters for the appropriate timing, intensity, frequency, and duration variables (sec. 92.23b).

92.23a - Scope of Proposed Action

The responsible official determines the scope of a proposed action. This means that the line officer with the delegated authority to implement a proposed action also has the discretion to decide how complex or narrowly focused a proposed action is. A proposed action that is broad in scope may encompass a suite of activities designed to achieve various desired resource conditions. Alternatively, a proposed action that is narrow in scope may focus exclusively on authorization of livestock grazing.

While there is no requirement regarding how narrow or broad the scope of a proposed action is defined, the scope has a direct bearing on the complexity of the environmental analysis. Combining several activities into one proposed action may be efficient for analysis purposes, but analysis timeframes generally increase with the breadth of scope. Trade offs are generally associated with time or cost. Proposed actions that are broad in scope generally take more time to analyze, but planning costs are less per activity. Conversely, proposed actions that are narrow in scope generally take less time to analyze, but planning costs per activity may be higher. Responsible officials should consider these trade offs when developing proposed actions.

92.23b - Adaptive Management

1. When livestock grazing is proposed using an adaptive management strategy, the proposed action shall set defined limits using adaptive management principles of what is allowed, such as timing, intensity, frequency, and duration of livestock grazing. These limits set standards that can be checked through monitoring to determine if actions prescribed were

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followed, and if changes are needed in management. The NEPA analysis discloses the effects for these standards. Administrative actions within the defined limits of the resultant NEPA-based decision can then be implemented without additional NEPA. Examples of administrative decisions include:

- a. Determination of specific dates for grazing,
 - b. Specific livestock numbers,
 - c. Class of animal,
 - d. Grazing systems, and
 - e. Range readiness when these variables fit within the NEPA-based decision.
2. Adaptive management utilizes the interdisciplinary planning and implementation process that provides:
- a. Identification of site-specific desired conditions;
 - b. Definition of appropriate decision criteria (constraints) to guide management;
 - c. Identification of pre-determined optional courses of action, as part of a proposed action to be used to make adjustments in management over time, and
 - d. Establishment of carefully focused project monitoring to be used to make adjustments in management over time.

Planning for adaptive management may be initiated during development of the proposed action. It involves identification of future management options that may be needed to accelerate or adjust management decisions to meet desired conditions and/or project standards and objectives, as the need is determined through monitoring.

3. In circumstances where changes in conditions warrant implementation of a management option that has not been provided for in the NEPA analysis, or when the predicted effects of implementation are determined to be greater than the effects originally predicted, a supplemental or new NEPA analysis and NEPA-based decision is needed.

4. Building adaptive management flexibility into management allows for decisions that are responsive to needed adjustments in permitted actions. Historically, decisions have been too narrowly focused, such as deciding to authorize a specific number, kind, or class of livestock with specific on- and off-dates under a specific type of grazing system. These kinds of decisions have restricted management flexibility in meeting desired conditions and project objectives.

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5. The key to development of adaptive management actions is to focus on factors that are essential to ensure management objectives are met. Critical factors may consider issues, such as timing restrictions in specific areas to manage conflicts with fisheries, big game, or recreation; or allowable use standards to ensure retention of defined levels of cover or riparian residual vegetation to trap and retain sediments. In any case, the focus must be on defining criteria that are critical to management success and to move away from making decisions that unduly restrict flexibility. Yet, in all cases, the proposed action must adequately detail the type and level of activities that can take place on a given allotment(s).

6. With a well-crafted adaptive management approach, the NEPA-based decision can remain viable for an extended period of time as long as there is periodic review of the actions for consistency with the NEPA-based decision. In most cases, the only situations that would require an updated NEPA analysis would be where unforeseen changed conditions have occurred that require management actions that have not been considered, and which may produce effects outside the scope of those predicted within the original NEPA analysis document.

92.3 - Project-Level Planning and NEPA Compliance

Project-level decisionmaking is usually more expeditious and efficient when it is based upon the completion of large scale assessments, followed by site-specific analyses on allotments that share similar ecological conditions and resource issues.

Except where expressly provided for by law, a site-specific analysis of environmental effects of livestock grazing projects on affected National Forest System lands and resources must be completed pursuant to NEPA before the grazing activity can be authorized.

General environmental analysis requirements are set forth in regulations adopted by the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 CFR 1500 et seq. and in the Forest Service Directive System at FSH 1909.15.

92.31 - Alternatives

Analysis of alternatives requires consideration of a range of reasonable alternatives. The range of reasonable alternatives includes both alternatives that warrant detailed analysis, and alternatives that are considered but eliminated from detailed study. In cases where the design and configuration of the proposed action can mitigate resource concerns to acceptable levels, the proposed action may be the only viable action alternative. When there is a significant issue with the proposed action, an alternative to the proposed action shall be developed and analyzed in detail (FSH 1909.15, sec. 14). In all cases, the rationale and development of alternatives shall be addressed and disclosed in the NEPA analysis for the project.

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In addition to the proposed action, the “no action” alternative shall always be fully developed and analyzed in detail. “No action” is synonymous with “no grazing” and means that livestock grazing would not be authorized within the project area.

Current management should also be analyzed in detail as an alternative to the proposed action if current management meets the stated purpose and need for action. This alternative shall be based on the current management actions being implemented, specifically, current management over the last 3 to 5 years. Current management direction may be contained in an allotment management plan (sec. 94.1), annual operating instructions (AOI) (sec. 94.3), or a combination thereof. The current management alternative may also be the proposed action. This would be appropriate when current management is determined to be consistent with the land and resource management plan and has been shown to be effective in meeting resource objectives through monitoring over time.

Detailed direction for development of alternatives is found in FSH 1909.15, section 14.

92.32 - Effects of Alternatives

The evaluation of a proposed action’s environmental effects must include:

1. The potential effects of all actions,
2. All adaptive management options included in the alternatives, and
3. Those actions that may be implemented at some future point in time. For example, if one potential option is to fence off a riparian area, the effects of that fence must be evaluated even if that management option may never actually be implemented.

Detailed direction for estimating effects of each alternative is found in FSH 1909.15, section 15.

92.33 - Documentation

The level of environmental analysis and documentation required for Forest Service projects is guided by the NEPA procedures set out at FSH 1909.15, chapters 20 and 40.

93 - INTEGRATION OF OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS INTO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT DECISIONMAKING PROCESS

93.1 - Endangered Species Act (ESA)

For direction on compliance with ESA, refer to 50 CFR part 402, implementing regulations of ESA, and FSM 2670.

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93.2 - National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

For further direction, refer to the National Programmatic Agreement between the Forest Service and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Rangeland Management Activities on National Forest System lands (FSM 1539.61), and also to State or local programmatic agreements.

93.3 - Clean Water Act (CWA)

Compliance with the CWA is achieved through the proper site-specific design, implementation and monitoring of Best Management Practices (BMP). BMPs are practices approved by the State and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that are intended to result in compliance with State water quality standards. BMPs are usually a component of land and resource management plans (LRMPs), and are often listed in Chapter 2 of a LRMP with Forest Standards. As approved practices or as Forest Standards, BMPs are one of the required elements of each environmental assessment and AMP. A key concept of BMPs is that if monitoring identifies any circumstance of noncompliance with State water quality standards, then the Forest Service is obligated to respond to the situation to restore compliance. As long as BMPs have been applied and monitoring and adjustments are ongoing, then the Forest Service is in compliance with the CWA. See EPA's SAM-32 direction, 8/87, <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/library/wqstandards/npscontrols.pdf> for further direction.

When an allotment contains streams or lakes included on a State's 303(d) list of impaired waters (these waters are also included in the State's bi-annual 305(b) report), it means that a State-led Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process for restoration is required. The process is the responsibility of the States to design, and the Forest Service to implement and monitor. The TMDL shall include specific restoration and monitoring requirements, even on Federal lands. Check with your Regional Office to determine whether a Memorandum of Understanding has been established with the State that allows the Forest Service to perform the required TMDL process, or allows collaboration with the State in its development. Prior to the establishment of a formal TMDL, management may continue as long as BMPs are applied and subsequent monitoring is implemented.

94 - NEPA-BASED DECISIONS AND IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS THAT FOLLOW

Except as authorized under section 504(a) of the Rescissions Act of 1995 (Pub.L. 104-19) or the 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Resolution (Pub.L. 108-108, Nov. 10, 2003), the project-level NEPA-based decision to authorize grazing on one or more allotments is made by the authorized officer upon completion of site-specific environmental analysis. The decision to authorize

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grazing is made in the NEPA-based decision document whose major focus is on maintaining or achieving the desired land condition. The grazing permit, accompanying allotment management plan (AMP) (sec. 94.1) as appropriate, and annual operating instructions (sec. 94.3) all serve to implement the project-level decision to authorize grazing (sec. 96). The AMP becomes a part of the grazing permit. If an AMP currently exists, it should be revised to reflect new information from the most recent project-level decision. The grazing permit is then modified to include the revised AMP. Subsequent modifications to grazing or related management activities may be made as long as those changes are within the scope of the project-level decision.

94.1 - Allotment Management Plans (AMPs)

AMPs contain the pertinent livestock management direction from the project-level NEPA-based decision (sec. 92.23, para. 2). AMPs also refine direction in the project-level NEPA based decision deemed necessary by the authorized officer to implement that decision. AMPs should be developed concurrently with the completion of the site-specific analysis and project-level decision.

Each AMP shall become a part of Part 3 of the grazing permit with a letter to the permittee(s) notifying them of this modification.

94.2 - Grazing Permits

A grazing permit is the instrument that authorizes a specific holder of the grazing permit to graze livestock on certain National Forest System or other lands under Forest Service jurisdiction. The grazing permit contains specific terms and conditions as provided by the NEPA based decision that authorized the grazing use. The timely issuance of a grazing permit constitutes implementation of a project-level NEPA-based decision. The terms and conditions of the grazing permit must be consistent with the project-level decision. Where site-specific analysis and a project-level decision are completed subsequent to issuance of a grazing permit pursuant to section 504(a) of the Rescissions Act, or the 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Resolution (Pub.L. 108-108, Nov. 10, 2003) it may be necessary to modify the existing permit or issue a new permit with new terms and conditions to ensure that it conforms to the direction of the project-level decision.

94.3 - Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)

The AOIs specify those annual actions that are needed to implement the management direction set forth in the project-level NEPA-based decision. Actions in the AOIs must be within the scope of the project-level decision, and as such are not required to undergo any additional site-specific environmental analysis.

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To the extent feasible, the AOI should be developed with the permittee. The AOIs shall clearly and concisely identify the obligations of the permittee and the Forest Service, and clearly articulate annual grazing management requirements, standards, and monitoring necessary to document compliance.

The AOIs should set forth:

1. The maximum permissible grazing use authorized on the allotment for the current grazing season and should specify numbers, class, type of livestock, and timing and duration of use.
2. The planned sequence of grazing on the allotment, or the management prescriptions and monitoring that will be used to make changes.
3. Structural and non-structural improvements to be constructed, reconstructed, or maintained and who is responsible for these activities.
4. Allowable use or other standards to be applied and followed by the permittee to properly manage livestock.
5. Monitoring for the current season that may include, among other things, documentation demonstrating compliance with the terms and conditions in the grazing permit, AMP (sec. 94.1), and AOI. In addition, the permittee may be asked to provide information regarding livestock distribution or the condition of improvements. Where adaptive management prescriptions are being followed, this section of the AOI must provide details about those monitoring items and decision points needed to determine when a change is necessary and to guide the direction that those changes take (sec. 95).

95 - MONITORING

Monitoring shall be included in the project-level decision. This includes monitoring required as a result of section 7 of the Endangered Species Act regarding consultation (sec. 93.1). Monitoring can determine whether the project-level decision is being implemented as planned (implementation monitoring) and, if so, whether the objectives identified in the LRMP and AMP (sec. 94.1) are being achieved in a timely manner (effectiveness monitoring). Allotment monitoring should be an open, cooperative, and inclusive process. Invite participation from rangeland users and other interested parties where feasible. Implementation and focused effectiveness monitoring are critical to determine when or if adaptive management changes should be made and to guide the direction that those changes take.

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As the project decision is implemented, monitoring should indicate whether actions are being implemented as planned and are meeting standards and design criteria (implementation monitoring), and whether those actions are effective in meeting or moving toward desired resource conditions (effectiveness monitoring). If monitoring indicates that desired conditions are not being met, other pre-determined management options (such as adaptive management) included in the project decision may be selected for implementation. If monitoring indicates that management is meeting standards, and is meeting or moving toward the desired conditions in an acceptable timeframe, the initial management options may continue.

Finally, management requires the interdisciplinary team and authorized officer to periodically evaluate monitoring results and to determine if other described management options are warranted.

95.1 - Types of Monitoring

The two types of monitoring to consider in the site-specific analysis and project-level decision are:

1. Implementation monitoring. This type of monitoring determines if activities are implemented as designed.

2. Effectiveness Monitoring. This type of monitoring determines if activities are effective in meeting objectives. Evaluation of the results of effectiveness monitoring is used to implement adaptive management.

95.2 - Monitoring and Evaluation Methods

Interagency Monitoring Technical References provide the monitoring methodologies that should be used (FSM 2206). Technical references may be supplemented by Regional Handbooks (FSM 2209).

95.3 - Allowable Use

Not exceeding allowable use is a responsibility permittees assume when they accept a term grazing permit. Term permits are described in FSH 2209.13, chapter 10.

96 - REVIEW OF EXISTING PROJECT-LEVEL NEPA-BASED DECISIONS

Review of existing project-level NEPA-based decisions (sec. 94) must be conducted periodically to determine if the analysis and documentation remain valid or if new information exists that requires some further analysis and potential modification of the activity. If the authorized officer

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determines that correction, supplementation, or revision is not necessary, implementation of existing decisions shall continue. The findings of the review shall be documented in the project file. See FSH 1909.15, section 18 for further direction on review and analysis requirements related to existing project-level NEPA-based decisions.

96.1 - Modifications Not Requiring New NEPA-Based Decisions

A project-level NEPA-based decision remains valid as long as the authorized activity complies with laws, regulations, LRMP, and is within the scope of the project-level NEPA-based decision. Therefore, it is not necessary to initiate a new site-specific analysis in order to undertake a modification that has already been analyzed, decided upon, and documented. Management actions should be adjusted when monitoring indicates that those actions are not effective in reaching defined objectives. This is the basic premise behind adaptive management (sec. 92.23b).

96.2 - Adaptive Management Modifications

Adaptive management options that would be activated if the authorized activity is not achieving the anticipated objectives must be specified in the project-level decision. When monitoring indicates the need for implementation of adaptive management modifications disclosed in the project-level NEPA-based decision, those modifications can be implemented without further NEPA review.